

Claims

What is claimed:

1. In a television network system, subscriber equipment for displaying targeted advertisements to a subscriber, the
5 subscriber equipment comprising:

a communications interface for receiving at least one queue of targeted advertisements, wherein the at least one queue is selectively distributed to the subscriber;

memory for storing the at least one queue of selectively
10 distributed advertisements;

a processor for inserting the targeted advertisements in program streams for display to the subscriber; and

a trigger circuit for determining if the at least one queue has reached a low-level, wherein said communications interface
15 receives at least one additional queue of targeted advertisements in response to a low-level determination by said trigger circuit.

2. The system of claim 1, further comprising a counter for tracking number of times each targeted advertisement is displayed
20 to the subscriber.

3. The system of claim 1, wherein said communications interface also receives the targeted advertisements and said

memory also stores said targeted advertisements, the at least one queue identifies a sequence for said processor to insert the targeted advertisement in the program stream for display to the subscriber.

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4. The system of claim 3, wherein each targeted advertisements stored in said memory is identified by an advertisement identifier that uniquely identifies the targeted advertisement and the at least one queue references the advertisement identifier.

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5. The system of claim 1, wherein for each targeted advertisement within the at least one queue, the at least one queue includes advertiser data identifying the advertiser sponsoring the advertisement.

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6. The system of claim 1, wherein for each targeted advertisement within the at least one queue, the at least one queue includes a time frame defining a time during which the targeted advertisement should be displayed.

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7. The system of claim 6, wherein the time frame defining the time during which the advertisement should be displayed includes at least one of:

an hour frame indicating the hours of the day during which
5 the advertisement should be displayed;

a day frame indicating the days of the week, month or year during which the advertisement should be displayed;

a week frame indicating the weeks of the month or year during which the advertisement should be displayed; and

10 a month frame indicating the months of the year during which the advertisement should be displayed.

8. The system of claim 1, wherein for each targeted advertisement within the at least one queue, the at least one
15 queue includes at least one of:

an expiration date of the targeted advertisement;

a maximum total number of times the targeted advertisement should be displayed;

a maximum number of times the targeted advertisement should
20 be displayed each day;

a total number of times the targeted advertisement has previously been displayed to the subscriber; and

a number of times the targeted advertisement has been displayed that day.

9. The system of claim 1, wherein said trigger circuit
5 determines that the at least one queue has reached a low-level if
at least one of the following occur:

the at least one queue has less than a particular number of slots remaining;

the at least one queue has less than a particular number of
10 targeted advertisements remaining; and

the at least one queue has a particular number of targeted advertisements that are almost expired.

10. The system of claim 1, wherein said communications
15 interface is connectable to an advertisement management system over a network connection wherein the targeted advertisements are identified by the advertisement management system based on a profile of the subscriber supplied to the advertisement management system.

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11. The system of claim 1, wherein the at least one queue includes a state indicator for activating said trigger circuit .

12. In a television network, a system for displaying targeted advertisements to subscribers, the system comprising:

an advertisement management system for

identifying targeted advertisements for a subscriber by

5 correlating advertisement profiles with a subscriber profile, and

generating at least one queue of targeted advertisements for the subscriber, wherein each of the at least one queue identifies a sequence for presenting the targeted advertisements to the subscriber;

10 an advertisement distribution system for distributing the targeted advertisements and at least one of the at least one queue to the subscriber over the television network; and

subscriber equipment for receiving the targeted advertisements and the at least one queue and displaying the
15 targeted advertisements to the subscriber, the subscriber equipment including:

a communications interface for communicating with said advertisement management system advertisement and said distribution system,

20 memory for storing the targeted advertisements and the at least one queue,

a processor, responsive to the queue, for inserting the targeted advertisements in program streams for display to the subscriber, and

5 a trigger circuit for determining if the at least one queue has reached a low-level, wherein said subscriber equipment receives at least one additional queue in response to a low-level determination by said trigger circuit.

10 13. A set-top box for inserting targeted advertisements in place of default advertisements within television program streams, the set-top box comprising:

a communications interface for receiving a plurality of targeted advertisements and a queue identifying criteria for inserting the targeted advertisements;

15 memory for storing the targeted advertisements and the queue;

a processor for determining when and what targeted advertisement should be inserted into the program stream based on the queue;

20 an inserter for inserting the targeted advertisement into the program stream; and

a trigger circuit for determining when the targeted advertisements and the queue need to be refreshed.

14. A method for inserting targeted advertisements in place of default advertisements within television program streams, the method comprising:

5 receiving a plurality of targeted advertisements and a queue identifying criteria for inserting the targeted advertisements;

storing the targeted advertisements and the queue in memory;

determining when and what targeted advertisement should be inserted into the program stream based on the queue;

10 inserting the targeted advertisement into the program stream; and

determining when the targeted advertisements and the queue need to be refreshed.